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Economic and Social Council

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E/1996/93
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Resumed substantive session of 1996
New York, 2-4 October 1996
Item 1 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

General segment

5. Social, humanitarian and human rights questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions:

   (d) Human rights questions.

6. Economic and environmental questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions:

   (i) Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/106: business and development.

9. Coordination questions:

   (a) Reports of the coordination bodies.

10. Non-governmental organizations.

11. Programme and related questions in the economic, social and related fields.

13. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227: further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

14. Elections.

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Annotations

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The Council will consider the selection of themes for the high-level and coordination segments of its substantive session of 1997.

The Council, in accordance with its resolution 1994/33 on the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council, will consider a principal theme or themes for consideration at the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment of the substantive session of 1997.

The Council will also consider the applications of Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General on the selection of a theme for the 1997 high-level segment of the Council (E/1996/)

Note by the Secretary-General on the applications of Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (E/1996/94)

General segment

Item 5. Social, humanitarian and human rights questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions

(d) Human rights questions

In resolution 1996/38, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council, at its resumed substantive session of 1996, a report on the legal procedure necessary to bring the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in line with other similar human rights treaty bodies.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the legal procedure necessary to bring the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in line with other similar human rights treaty bodies (E/1996/)

Item 6. Economic and environmental questions: reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions

(i) Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/106: business and development

In decision 1996/305, the Council decided to continue consideration of agenda item 6 (i), including the draft resolution entitled "Corruption and bribery in transnational commercial activities" (E/1996/L.26), at its resumed

substantive session of 1996, and also requested the President of the Council to continue to facilitate open-ended consultations prior to its resumed substantive session, with a view to enhancing the prospects for achieving consensus.

Item 9. Coordination questions

(a) Reports of the coordination bodies

The Council decided to keep agenda item 9 (a) open for possible further consideration at its resumed substantive session.

Documentation

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on its thirty-sixth session

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1995 (E/1996/18 and Add.1)

Item 10. Non-governmental organizations

The Council will consider the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 1996 session, which was held in two parts (Headquarters, 13-17 May and 26-30 August 1996). At its substantive session of 1995, the Council decided that, starting in 1996, the Committee should meet annually, and decided to request the Committee to undertake a thorough review of its methods of work with a view to improving and streamlining its procedures (decision 1995/304).

Documentation

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 1996 session (Headquarters, 13-17 May and 26-30 August 1996) (E/1996/)

Item 11. Programme and related questions in the economic, social and related fields

Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997

The Council will have before it the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 covering activities in the economic, social and related fields. The Council will examine the revisions in the light of the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the matter (resolution 1988/77).

Documentation

Relevant chapters of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997

Item 13. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227: further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields

On the proposal of the Secretary-General, a new item, entitled "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227: further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields", has been included in the provisional agenda for the resumed substantive session of the Council. Issues relating to that resolution, which have hitherto been considered under other agenda items, will henceforth be grouped under this new item.

In resolution 1996/41, the Council decided to consider as a matter of priority, at its resumed substantive session to be held before the end of 1996, the possible changes in and/or adjustments to its agenda with a view to ensuring that all issues included in General Assembly resolution 50/227 were examined by the Council.

In the same resolution, the Council decided to consider, also as a matter of priority, at the resumed substantive session, a review of the agenda of the Council's general segment in accordance with paragraph 67 of annex I to General Assembly resolution 50/227. The Council is to consider harmonization of the work programmes of its functional commissions on the basis of a background note on the subject.

To assist the Council in its deliberations, the Secretariat has prepared three conference room papers: one concerns the harmonization and coordination of the agendas and multi-year programmes of work of the functional commissions of the Council; another is a revised background note prepared to assist the Council in its deliberations on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227; the third contains an analysis of agenda items of the Economic and Social Council and the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly and provides historical background.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat containing an analysis of agenda items of the Economic and Social Council and the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly and providing historical background (E/1996/CRP.5)

Note by the Secretariat entitled "General Assembly resolution 50/227 - provisions related to the Economic and Social Council" (E/1996/CRP.3/Rev.1)

Background paper on the harmonization and coordination of the agendas and multi-year programmes of work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (E/1996/CRP.4)

Item 14. Elections

In resolution 1996/7, the Council decided to enlarge the membership of the Commission for Social Development from 32 to 46. Recognizing the importance of

adequate representation in the Commission, the Council will elect 14 new members at its resumed substantive session of 1996.

The Council will take action on the candidacy of one member of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development, which was endorsed by the Latin American and Caribbean States but deferred from the substantive session because of the absence of a curriculum vitae.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General on the election of 14 new members to the Commission for Social Development (E/1996/95)

Note by the Secretary-General on the election of a member of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development (E/1996/L.15/Add.2)

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Item 1 of the provisional agenda*

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has received applications from Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (see attached).

2. By its resolution 1986/66 of 23 July 1986, the Economic and Social Council invited the Secretary-General to encourage the participation of experts on a wider geographical basis. Governments are invited to make available, at the request of the Secretary-General and at their own expense, experts to serve on the Committee.

3. The present membership of the Committee consists of experts from Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

4. The Secretary-General is pleased to approve the applications of Australia and Spain for full membership in the Committee and requests the Council's endorsement of that decision.

* E/1996/93.

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Annex I

LETTER DATED 9 JULY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

I am writing to seek formal Australian membership of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

Australia has been attending meetings of this Committee, as an observer, for a number of years. Although Australia's observer status does not provide formal voting rights, our delegations have actively participated in debates and discussion on a wide range of dangerous goods transport issues.

Australia has a well-developed regulatory regime for the transport of dangerous goods. Our transport requirements, as detailed in the Australian Dangerous Goods (ADG) Code, are derived from the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. These Recommendations, prepared by the above-mentioned Committee, have formed the technical basis for Australia's dangerous goods transport requirements and legislation for over 10 years. As such, Australia has extensive practical experience in applying the Recommendations to the domestic and international transport sectors.

The manner in which Australia incorporates its dangerous goods requirements into national legislation and regulations has also been of interest to the Committee. In particular, the format of the Recommendations is to be changed from an advisory document into a set of "model regulations", drafted in a style suitable for incorporation into legislation. This initiative mirrors a similar decision taken in Australia approximately two years ago to draft the ADG Code into national uniform model regulations. Given Australia's close alignment with the Recommendations, our regulation development experience may be of value to the work of the Committee in this area.

Australia believes that our extensive dangerous goods experience and regulatory framework would enable Australia to make a valuable contribution to the work of the Committee. This position is supported by a number of members of the Committee who have actively encouraged Australia to seek formal membership status. Australian membership of the Committee would also expand the regional representation on the Committee.

I would therefore be grateful if you could initiate the necessary procedures to ensure that Australia's request for formal membership of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods is submitted to the appropriate United Nations decision-making organizations.

(Signed) Howard BAMSEY

Annex II

LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR TRANSPORT SERVICES OF THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT OF SPAIN ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

For many years, the Spanish Government and the relevant business sectors have taken a growing interest in all matters related to the transport of dangerous goods. This interest has been heightened in recent years by a significant increase in this activity by all means of transport, including multimodal transport, as a result of the country's own economic growth and its growing involvement in world trade; its membership in the European Union has been a key factor in this regard.

Because of its geographical location and its isolated areas, Spain has always been a transit and destination country for a considerable volume of trade in products classified as dangerous, primarily petroleum products. Since the country's major ports draw large concentrations of this traffic, attention is being focused on regulating and controlling it because of the risks it involves and the population's growing awareness of this issue.

With respect to internal traffic, Spain has developed an important chemical and mining industry, with the result that flows from production sites in various parts of the country represent very large concentrations of such traffic, which is carried mainly by road and coastal transport, as well as by railroads and, to a lesser extent, pipelines.

In view of the foregoing, Spain has subscribed to all existing international agreements and rules in this area - the European Agreement concerning International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), International Regulations concerning the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID), International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) - and has incorporated these provisions into its national regulations. In some cases, such as that of road transport, Spain has made these rules even more strict.

Spain has participated as actively as possible in the various meetings held regularly on this subject - the ADR meeting, the joint RID-ADR meeting and the RID, IMDG Code and Dangerous Security Container (DSC) group meetings - and in the meetings of ICAO, as a member of the ICAO Council.

Likewise, Spain has participated for many years as an observer in the meetings of the Committee and the Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and in one of their working parties. For all of these reasons, we believe that the time has come for Spain to become a full member of both the Committee and the Subcommittee of Experts, to which end I ask that this formal application, in which Spain takes the keenest interest, be transmitted to the appropriate party.

(Signed) Manuel PANADERO LÓPEZ
Secretary-General for Transport Services

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ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS

Enlargement of the membership of the Commission for Social Development: election of 14 members

1. By resolution 1996/7 of 22 July 1996, the Economic and Social Council decided that the membership of the Commission for Social Development should be increased from 32 to 46.

2. In the same resolution, the Council decided that the members of the Commission should be elected by the Council from among the States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies according to the following pattern:

(a) Twelve members from African States;

(b) Ten members from Asian States;

(c) Five members from Eastern European States;

(d) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Ten members from Western European and other States.

3. The Council will therefore elect the new members according to the following pattern:

(a) Four members from African States;

(b) Four members from Asian States;

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* E/1996/93.

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(c) One member from Eastern European States;

(d) Three members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Two members from Western European and other States.

4. In accordance with United Nations practice, upon completion of the membership, lots will be drawn to stagger the initial terms of office. Therefore, three members will serve for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1996, three members will serve for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1997, four members will serve for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1998 and four members will serve for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 1999.